

**ST. KATHARINE'S CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL
GOVERNING BODY**

**The minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body
held on 17 May 2011 at 6.30pm at the School**

PRESENT: Peter Holland (Chair), Sharon Cross (Acting Headteacher), Vanya Body, Kevin Sandall, Gill de Berry, Julianne Smith, Rodney Harrison, Sara Clemence (SCLM) (from item 2), Chris Hoggarth (Associate Member) and Dorothy Riley (Clerk).

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Jason Lewis, Colin Langdon and Peter Sewell.

RH led Governors in prayer.

2 Declarations of Interest

2.1 Pecuniary interests - register 2010-11

None.

2.2 Conflicts of interest with items on agenda

SC and KS for 'Headteacher's Recruitment' at Item 5.2.

2.3 Interests of immediate family

None.

2.4 Subsequently declared interests

None.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

3.1 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 08 February 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 08 February 2011 were approved as a true and correct record. A signed copy was given to SC for filing. KS will arrange for publication on the website.

Action: Headteacher, KS

3.1.1 Matters arising (not covered by later agenda items)

It was noted that all the Action points had been carried out except as noted below:

Conflicts of Interests form for 2010-11 Register: The Headteacher will give RH a form to complete this Friday.

Action: Headteacher/RH

Guide to St Katharine's: KS will check that both copies of the Guide have been uploaded on to the school website.

Action: KS

Induction of Pupils Policy: Deferred to the next meeting.

Action: Headteacher

Media Relations Policy: Deferred to the next meeting.

Action: VB

Gritting of roads: The Headteacher will talk to Avenue Pre-School and co-ordinate a response to the Highways Department. The Chair will write to Wiltshire Council with a Freedom of Information Act request.

Action: Headteacher/Chair

Attendance: The Headteacher reported that Attendance information is included in every parent newsletter. Additionally, she is telephoning parents whose child is absent frequently or without explanation, with positive results. Attendance will be discussed further under the Headteacher's Report.

Governor visits with Subject Leaders: The Headteacher will remind Subject Leaders to email Governors with suggested dates and times for meetings.

Action: Headteacher

School hall: The first 2 planks in the School hall require investigation.

Action: Headteacher

4 Headteacher's Report including SEN support provision

Governors noted the Headteacher's Report circulated with the Agenda. The following areas were discussed:

Abbreviations list: A comprehensive list of abbreviations will accompany future Reports.

Number on Roll: With Grafton School closing at the end of the academic year, the NoR is likely to change. The Local Authority has admitted 5 children from Grafton School into St Katharine's; they will start on 18 July increasing the NoR to 81. Governors will be discussing how to accommodate the additional children with the Local Authority.

Admissions: There are approximately 12 first choice admissions for September.

Proposed extension: The technical drawings and specifications are available, in school, for Governors to view. The Architect has invited four contractors to tender; CH agreed to look over the specification to ensure that tendering is correct.

Action: CH

Eco-Schools: There is a meeting after the May break. SClm and CL have both expressed an interest in Eco-Schools. The School is aiming to achieve the Bronze award by July and may even be able to achieve the Silver award. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust are giving advice on the proposed pond and are visiting the School.

Healthy lifestyles: The school is promoting participation in music and 9 pupils are attending either cello or violin weekly lessons.

SATS: Pupils have taken the SATs and the papers have been sent off for marking. The threshold for level 4 and 5 is unknown at present. Governors noted that having a late Easter break and the additional Royal Wedding Bank Holiday may have had a negative impact on pupil performance. The results are expected at the beginning of July.

Pupil Progress: Governors discussed each year group's progress at some length, with the Headteacher updating the March data detailed in her report. The data had not been available at the time of the Curriculum and Assessment Committee meeting. Overall, progress is satisfactory (expected) or good (above expectations). Interventions are in place where individual progress is inadequate. There is the right mix of support across the School with additional support being allocated to Year 4 pupils who have the most catching up to do.

A Governor enquired about the definition of 'vulnerable' children. The Headteacher explained that the school not only follows the National definition, which would include 'looked after' children, but also looks at the background of the children for indicators, eg family circumstances, that may affect pupil learning. Where 'vulnerable' pupils are identified, appropriate support is actioned.

SEN provision: The Headteacher referred to SEN provision in the appendix of her report. Governors noted that Ofsted have expressed a need to reduce the number of children included in the SEN Register and in the future it is likely that more pupils will be 'a concern'.

Behaviour and Racist incidents: Governors welcomed the recording of 'none'.

Attendance: This is the record from September to Friday 13 May 2011. The target is 4.9% with the actual rate at 5.0%. The National target is 5.5%. Governors welcomed the news that 5.0% will be included on the school's Census.

Observations: A range of observations have been undertaken by the Headteacher, School Improvement Partner and Advisory Headteacher with positive feedback. KS and SH were both moderated last term. Both moderators commented on the amount of different evidence that both teachers used to reach their judgements with this being noted as good practice. Governors congratulated KS on the number of outstanding features that were observed.

Annual Reports to parents: Governors noted that the changed format of giving information about the pupil's effort as well as achievement and circulating the reports in March had been well received by both parents and pupils.

Forest Schools: The Headteacher referred to a recently attended course and recommended 'Forest Schools award' as priority in next year's School Development Plan. It is intended that every class should spend one class in the Forest every 3 weeks. A BTEC course will be available for Headteachers.

Governor issues: CH agreed to write an evaluation of the School Fete; the new one page form will be forwarded to CH.

Action: Headteacher/CH

5 Committee updates

5.1 Curriculum and Assessment Committee

5.1.1 To receive Minutes including Report to the meeting held on 05 May 2011

Governors noted the draft Curriculum and Assessment Committee minutes circulated with the agenda. The meeting had focussed on the School Development Plan which had been traffic lit. Governors concluded that there were no items of concern.

JS reported that she will be re-circulating the Governor visit form.

Action: JS

5.2 Human Resources Committee

5.2.1 To receive Report

VB gave an oral report to Governors as follows:

- The Bursar, Mrs Stagg, is now the MDSAs' line manager. All is going well and the MDSAs have welcomed the School appreciating their role in school life. Governors congratulated the Headteacher on getting the MDSA system to work well.
- Wiltshire Council's Model Pay Policy 2010-11 has been received and the school's current policy will be updated and brought to the next Governing Body meeting for adoption.

Action VB

- Cleaning of the School is not satisfactory. The Headteacher will investigate who is cleaning the School while Debbie is on maternity leave.

Action Headteacher

- Governors will review the Teaching Assistants workload after the new pupils have settled in.
- The Headteacher's NPQH certificate has come through and Governors congratulated her on this achievement.

The Headteacher and Staff Governor declared an interest in the next item and left the meeting.

Governors discussed the recruitment of a permanent Headteacher with the following being agreed:

- The recruitment panel of 5 Governors will include JS, VB, PH, GdB and SClm.
- The Headteacher's pay range will be as previously agreed by Governors (8-14).

- Advertising nationally in the Church Times will be investigated as an alternative to the TES.
- The date for giving notice to the Acting Headteacher, for 31 August, has passed so SC will carry on. The permanent Headteacher's post will be available from January 2012.

The Headteacher and Staff Governor returned to the meeting.

5.3 PR Committee

5.3.1 To receive Report from the meeting held on 14 March 2011

Governors noted the draft minutes from the PR Committee. Actions include sending out the annual parent questionnaire this month and undertaking a Travel Plan survey.

Action: Headteacher

VB reported that the domain name www.stkatharinesprimary.org automatically directs traffic to Merlin. The cost of buying the domain name was thought to be around £50 and KS agreed to investigate purchasing this.

Action: KS

5.4 Finance and Premises Committee

5.4.1 To receive Report/Minutes from the meeting held on 05 May 2011

The Chair apologised for the lateness in circulating the F & P Committee draft minutes and led Governors through the items of business. The principal item was consideration of the preliminary budget referred to below.

5.4.2 To consider preliminary budget for 2011/12

The School is required to cut back as detailed in the note on the budget (doc 6). There will be new expenditure such as paying for IT licences and Broadband connectivity at £4,250 and buying in Educational Advisors.

It was noted that the preliminary budget showed a figure of some £8,000 available for educational improvements and the F&P Committee had asked the Headteacher to come forward with suggestions for how best to spend this. The Headteacher reported that the temporary teacher is currently employed until the end of August and it would be desirable to extend her employment for another year to help support the Year 4 pupils if she is willing and funds are available.

The Preliminary budget was noted. The final Budget 2011-12 will be presented to the next Governing Body meeting in June for approval.

The Chair reported that the Accounting Technician has visited school today and closed down the Budget 2010-11. She reported that the Revenue Balance has reduced from £22,000 to £16,800. This is within the Local Authority permitted rollover threshold before excess Revenue is clawed back.

The Accounting Technician is returning next week to put the Budget 2011-12 on to the system. Capital of £50,000 is brought forward and the School will receive new Formula Capital of £4,800.

5.4.3 Proposed Extension update

Governors noted the draft programme for the office extension that had been circulated with the Agenda.

5.4.4 Pond proposal

The Chair reported that the Savernake Estate's final approval for the pond is still awaited.

6 Policies and other Documents

6.1 School Improvement & Development Plans 2010-11

Governors noted the School Improvement and Development Plans 2010-11 circulated with the agenda. The School Improvement Plan (derived from the plan produced in conjunction with the LA advisers and relating principally to teaching and learning) has been colour coded and the summary has been included in the Curriculum & Assessment Committee minutes.

The Chair led Governors through the shorter plan which covers the following 6 areas:

- **Teaching and Learning** (incorporating by reference the School Improvement Plan above)
- **Staffing**
- **Grounds and Buildings**
- **Links with Parents and Community**
- **Governors**
- **Governmental Reforms**

Governors approved this plan noting that much has already been achieved.

6.2 Home School Agreement

Adopted.

6.3 Healthy Schools Policy

The Headteacher reported that the updating of the Healthy Schools Award has come to an end. The School will keep the award and has an action plan for ongoing work in this area. The Policy was adopted with the proviso that it will reflect 'bought in food'.

Action: Headteacher

6.4 Curriculum Policy

The Curriculum Policy was adopted with the proviso that the Committee name is changed to 'Curriculum and Assessment' and 'Co-ordinators' are replaced with 'Subject Leaders'.

Action: Headteacher

6.5 Drugs Policy

Wiltshire Council's Drug Policy has not changed and the School policy was adopted as circulated, subject to some typographical corrections.

Action: Headteacher

6.6 Governor Visits Policy

The Governor Visits Policy was adopted subject to a change to reflect that the Core Subject Leaders will invite Governors in to School.

Action: Headteacher

6.7 Sex & Relationships Education Policy

Governors adopted the Policy, subject to a correction in the title and formatting. GdB and SClm will assist the Headteacher in looking at relevant materials for pupils.

Action: Headteacher/GdB/SClm

7 Governor Matters/Courses

7.1 To invite nominations for Chair and Vice Chair elections

The Clerk invited nominations, by Friday 10 June, for the Chair and Vice Chair elections which will be held at the next meeting. The nominations will appear on the Agenda.

Action: Governors

7.2 To appoint an Associate Member of the Governing Body

Following consideration by the Governing Body, Linda Scott was appointed Associate Member of the Governing Body for a period of one year initially, to serve on the Curriculum and Assessment Committee meetings and to participate in Governing Body meetings. Voting rights were not given. The Chair will inform Linda of her appointment.

Action: Chair

7.3 To receive reports on Governor Courses attended

School Church Conference: JS attended this conference in March and has fed back to the Headteacher good suggestions and ideas on improving the School's Christian distinctiveness.

Celebration of 200 Years of Church Schools: PH attended this conference earlier this month. With a reducing Local Authority, the conference had focussed on looking at what the Diocese needs to do now and sought Governor feed back in this area. Emphasis was placed on working more closely with the Parishes. The Diocese is looking at the services that it can provide including taking over the lead role, from Wiltshire Council, in the provision of Human Resources.

New Governors course: CH has recently attended this course and found it to be an excellent introduction to school governance.

Finance course: CH reported that this course had not provided best value in relation to the content and delivery. These views had been included on the training evaluation form. It was agreed that the Chair will discuss the concerns with Chris Harries, Head, Governor Services.

Clerks Conference: The Clerk had attended the conference last week. Areas discussed included sharing good practice in relation to minutes and new governor inductions and looking at information technology including Merlin and the new online booking system at Governor Services. The online booking system will be available to Governors once the initial teething problems have been resolved.

8 Late Arising Business

Governor Agendas and printing: To reduce the amount of printing for Governors meetings it was agreed to trial projecting the agenda and accompanying papers on to a screen at the next meeting. The Headteacher will provide one hard copy of the agenda at the meeting. The agenda will continue to be circulated electronically so Governors can read the papers prior to the meetings.

Last meeting for RH: RH reported that this may be his last Governing Body meeting prior to retirement as he may not be able to attend the June meeting due to a prior engagement. On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair thanked Rodney for his 13 years of service as ex officio Foundation Governor - his contributions to discussions were always useful. Rodney's successor in the Parish will be in post in October. As he will also be the Team Rector, he may not be able to take up the Foundation Governor post.

Date of next meeting: Monday, 27 June 2011